

For Immediate Release

December 19, 2024

Promoting universal design

“Making the creation of products that are easy for more people to use our standard”

## **Addition of Tactile Marks to all electronic toys of the TOMY Group**

**Design features employed so that persons with visual disabilities can easily determine “power ON/OFF” positions and locations of “battery cover screw holes”**

TOMY Company, Ltd.

TOMY Company, Ltd. (Representative Director, President & COO: Akio Tomiyama, headquarters: Katsushika-ku, Tokyo) has decided to add Tactile Marks next to switches, etc. as a design feature to switches of all electronic toy products of the TOMY Group starting from FY2024 so that persons with visual disabilities can easily operate the toys. For some products for which this measure cannot be adopted due to the shape of the toy or other constraints, such as cases where the molds are not produced by the Group, we will create a system where the development process cannot proceed unless an application has been submitted, and this measure will be adopted for all electronic toys in principle.

This measure will be implemented by expanding the applicable scope of the Tactile Marking, which have been added since 1990, to products beyond accessible-design toys<sup>(\*)</sup>, and also to the product categories of Group companies in Japan and overseas. The measure has already been adopted for the baby products of the overseas Group company TOMY International, Inc. (July 2024), and will be newly adopted for “GACHA” capsule toys (sales agent: T-ARTS Company, Ltd., December 2024), the “TOMIX” model railroad HO gauge series (sales agent: TOMYTEC CO., LTD., spring 2025) and other products.



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Since a Tactile Dot(s) is added next to the ON side of the power switch so that it can be determined by touch where the ON position is and a Tactile Ring is added around the screw hole for opening and closing the battery cover so that it is possible to distinguish it by touch from other screw holes, the Tactile Dots and Rings not only make it easier for children with visual disabilities to operate the toys, but also are useful for adults with visual disabilities who are raising children.

TOMY Company, which celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding in 2024, established “Create toys and Asobi that take into account universal design/DEI perspectives” as its new medium-term sustainability target.

<https://www.takaratomy.co.jp/english/company/csr/ourjourney/>

Based on our hope that toys will help bring people together, not divide them, we will continue this development and activities for promoting wider use toward the realization of an inclusive society through toys.

<https://www.takaratomy.co.jp/english/company/csr/story/2024/universaldesign/>

### **\*1 About “accessible-design toys”:**

TOMY Company’s accessible-design toys website: [www.takaratomy.co.jp/products/kyouyu](http://www.takaratomy.co.jp/products/kyouyu)

These toys are toys made and sold for the general market that children with and without visual disabilities can enjoy playing with. In 1980, TOMY Company established the “HT Laboratory” as the in-house R&D division for toys for children with disabilities, and then ten years later in 1990, rather than exclusive toys, we began the development and sales of toys for the general market with design features so that children with visual/auditory disabilities could also enjoy playing with them. This activity, which was started by TOMY Company, has been passed to the Japan Toy Association as an activity for the entire toy industry, and its development and promotion under the name of “accessible-design toys” is currently positioned as one of the important activities of the toy industry.

### **About Tactile Marks**



**Dot next to a switch**

Design feature of adding a dot next to the ON side so that it can be determined by touch where the ON position is



**Ring around the battery cover screw**

Design feature so that the screw hole for opening the battery cover can easily be determined

### **Expansion of the Applicable Scope of the “Tactile Dots”**

#### **(1) For all electronic toy products, not only accessible-design toys**

Although we have already been adding Tactile Dots and Rings to accessible-design toys in consideration of children with visual disabilities, we will also add Tactile Marks to all electronic toy products in the future. In cases where the Tactile Marks cannot be added due to the shape of a toy, we will create a system where the development process cannot proceed unless an application has been submitted and will strive to have the Tactile Marking added to as many toys as possible. Accordingly, children with visual disabilities will also be able to play with toys other than accessible-design toys. In addition, adults with visual disabilities who are raising children will be able to experience various toys on a daily basis. By adding the Tactile Marks to all electronic toys, not just accessible-design toys, we aim to create toys that can more people can operate with a greater sense of ease.

#### **(2) For products of Group companies, not only products of TOMY Company**

In conjunction with expanding the applicable scope to all electronic toy products for which the TOMY Group is responsible for producing the molds<sup>(\*2)</sup>, we are revising the quality standards based on the TOMY Group product quality rules and reviewing the development and inspection processes.

\*2 This measure cannot be adopted in some cases due to product constraints.

### **Examples of Each Company’s Products**



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**TOMY International, Inc. (headquarters: Illinois, USA)**

Product Name: “John Deere Key-n-Go Johnny Tractor - John Deere Kids” (launched in July 2024)

**T-ARTS Company, Ltd. (headquarters: Katsushika-ku, Tokyo)**

Product Name: GACHA’s “GACHA POLICE! —Save the Crime-Filled City—” (launched in December 2024)



**TOMYTEC CO., LTD. (headquarters: Mibu Town, Tochigi)**

Product Name: Model railroad “HO Track Cleaning Car” (scheduled to be launched in spring 2025)



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**Comment from Yasushi Nakano (Professor, Faculty of Economics, Keio University)**

**Who Conducted Research Regarding Visual Disabilities**

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“The Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities was amended in April 2024, making it mandatory for all business operators to provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities. I think it is wonderful that a company would officially and proactively take measures for improvement before being requested to consider such measures. I also think it is quite significant that ‘the development process for products on which the Tactile Marks cannot be added cannot proceed unless an application has been submitted.’”

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